

TRIBUTE TO U.S. SENATOR MITCH  
McCONNELL OF KENTUCKY

**HON. HAROLD ROGERS**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to U.S. Senator MITCH McCONNELL, a true statesman, who now holds the prestigious record as Kentucky's longest serving U.S. Senator. It is truly an honor for the Commonwealth of Kentucky to be served by such an accomplished and determined leader.

I remember the early days when MITCH first arrived in Washington, D.C., wandering the halls of Congress, but leaning on his experience as a local Judge-Executive in Jefferson County seeking compromise and working to solve problems. Today he is the Republican Leader in the United States Senate and is known for his mastery of parliamentary procedure, his ability to unite the Senate Republicans—which is no small feat—and standing firm on his conservative principles.

An advocate for Eastern Kentucky families, MITCH is a great friend of mine who understands the needs of the Bluegrass State and does everything he can to help those who need it most. MITCH is rightly credited for being an integral part of one of the greatest legislative achievements in Kentucky history, which were his efforts to pass the tobacco buyout. Many observers said the buyout would be impossible to arrange; however, MITCH dived in head first and with great focus was able to successfully push forward legislation that has allowed Kentucky farmers to transition to other crops and properly reimbursed quota holders. He should be proud of his efforts as he saved thousands of farmers and their families.

Always wanting to move Kentucky forward, MITCH has worked tirelessly to strengthen higher education which has benefitted millions in the Bluegrass State. By improving our universities, MITCH has not only helped our students succeed but has helped to bolster communities, create new jobs and build a strong workforce for the Commonwealth. Kentucky's future leaders have been awarded many new opportunities thanks to MITCH.

In addition to all he has done for the Commonwealth, MITCH is known as a fierce campaigner who did the seemingly impossible when he first defeated an incumbent Senator in 1984, and then went on to lay the foundation for the resurgence of the Kentucky Republican Party. Republican success within Kentucky is due in large part to MITCH's vision and hard work.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Senator MITCH McCONNELL and his accomplishment as Kentucky's longest serving Senator. He is truly a legend in the Commonwealth and I look forward to his continued successes.

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF  
WAYNE C. THOMPSON

**HON. DIANE E. WATSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, it is with profound sorrow that I learned of the passing of my associate and colleague, Wayne Thompson, in December. Over the past two years, Wayne had become a trusted advisor to me on the Freedmen's efforts to secure full citizenship in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. I will deeply miss Wayne's knowledge, wisdom, and sage advice. I have prepared the following resolution in honor of a man who defined the meaning of a purpose-driven life.

RESOLUTION

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson was born January 15, 1946, in Spencer, Oklahoma, the fourth of nine children of Tasso and Daisy Lee Thompson;

Whereas Wayne Thompson completed his secondary education in Spencer, Oklahoma and received a BSC in Social Psychology from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson served in the United States Army with tours of duty in Vietnam and Germany;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson dedicated his life to the promotion of human and civil rights around the world, including his participation in numerous marches and sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement and service to the international wing of the Black Panther Party;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson was the long-standing Executive Director of the Oklahoma Health Care Project through which he was involved with the Community Health Centers movement, Responsive Intervention Prevention Program for Community Organizations, the Young Black Men's and Women's Forums, Agent Orange Class Assistance Program, Developmental Outreach Program for Minority Communities, the Seminole and Cherokee Freedmen, World Health Organization, numerous delinquency prevention and youth violence intervention programs, All of Us or None, and the defense of political prisoners and the San Francisco 8;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson was a founding member of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century and a coordinator of the Haiti Support Project and had an abiding and profound interest and commitment to eradicating social and economic injustice in Central America, Mozambique, Haiti, and the developing world;

*Resolved,*

(1) That Wayne Thompson led an exemplary and selfless life in service of those less fortunate;

(2) That Wayne Thompson was a fighter for justice who sought no notoriety for his efforts to help oppressed people around the world; and

(3) That Wayne Thompson was a warrior with the biggest heart, one of the greatest civil rights soldiers the world has known, whose good deeds and works have left the world a better place, and whose memory will be carried forward by the legions of people he touched with his remarkable human spirit.

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR  
GEORGE VOINOVICH

**HON. JEAN SCHMIDT**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, this past Monday, Senator GEORGE VOINOVICH announced that he will not be seeking re-election to the United States Senate in 2010. Senator VOINOVICH has dedicated the last 40 years of his life to public service. I look forward to continuing to work with him over the next 2 years, but would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that he will be sorely missed when he leaves.

Since 1967, GEORGE VOINOVICH has been a fixture in Ohio politics. Ohio has been blessed to have such a tireless advocate so dedicated to serving others. Although Washington, DC will be losing a respected voice on so many pressing issues, I congratulate him on his 40 years of distinguished and outstanding service to the citizens of the State of Ohio and wish him, his wife, Janet, and his entire family the best in the coming years.

CONGRESSIONAL TRIBUTE HONORING  
LINDA CHAVEZ-THOMPSON

**HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 13, 2009*

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, we rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Linda Chavez-Thompson, a San Antonio resident who will be honored this Friday by the San Antonio AFL-CIO for her achievements and contributions to our community.

A native of Lubbock, Ms. Chavez-Thompson has been an integral part of the American labor movement for 40 years. In 1995, she made history when she was elected Executive Vice-President of the AFL-CIO, the first Hispanic to hold one of the organization's three highest offices. She currently serves as executive vice-president emerita and remains committed to delivering economic and social justice to all Americans.

Over the course of her life she has partnered with many organizations on behalf of civil and human rights, including those of women, immigrant Americans, and the LGBT community. And as she continues to work to better the world around her, her current projects include starting a scholarship fund for children of union members and developing a future leadership initiative.

The city of San Antonio, the State of Texas, and our entire country have reaped the benefits of her hard work and lifelong commitment to justice and equality, and we could not be more grateful for her contributions. Congressman CIRO RODRIGUEZ and I are honored to know her as a friend, and we congratulate Ms. Chavez-Thompson for all of her achievements and this well deserved recognition.